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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 005329

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SUBJECT: FUKUDA-ROH SUMMIT FOCUSES ON DPRK

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Classified By: A/DCM Mike Meserve per 1.4 (b/d)

Summary

¶1. (C) Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda met November 19 with ROK President Roh Moo-hyun, and the bulk of their conversation was focused on the DPRK. PM Roh underlined the importance of dialogue and generosity in dealing with the DPRK and explained that Kim Jong-il desires a security guarantee from the United States and economic cooperation with Japan. PM Fukuda stressed that progress on the abduction and nuclear issues must precede normalization with the DPRK, and that with normalization will come Japanese economic cooperation. With the exception of Japan's offer to return the remains of Korean soldiers conscripted in WWII, historical issues were not a feature of the summit meeting. Fukuda's performance with Roh (as well as his other Asian summit meetings) was greeted by the Japanese press as the advent of the "Second Fukuda Doctrine" of stressing the importance of Asian diplomacy. End Summary.

DPRK

¶2. (C) Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda met for approximately 50 minutes with ROK President Roh Moo-hyun on November 19 in Singapore. The bulk of the two leaders' discussion focused on the DPRK, MOFA Northeast Asia Principal Deputy Director Takeshi Akahori told Embassy Tokyo Political Section Deputy. President Roh briefly reviewed his October summit meeting with Kim Jong-il, noting that Kim recognizes the importance of improving relations with both Japan and the United States. Kim also understands that economic development is critical for the DPRK, and that Japanese economic assistance is a key aspect of this, Roh told Fukuda.

¶3. (C) More than anything, the DPRK wants a "security guarantee" from the United States, President Roh continued. In Roh's analysis, this guarantee outweighs even the importance of the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. While pressure can sometimes be useful, "dialogue, generosity and positivity" will yield better results with North Korea, Roh explained.

¶4. (C) Fukuda stressed that Japan's basic position is that resolving the abductions problem and settling the issue of the "unfortunate past" are key to normalizing Japan-DPRK

relations. Within this context, Japan wants to take steps to ensure that the nuclear and missile issues are also resolved and, to this end, cooperation with the United States and South Korea is critical. With the resolution of the abductions and nuclear issues can come normalization, and with it economic cooperation. PM Fukuda expressed his hope that North Korea not lose this current chance to improve relations with Japan. With the cooperation of the United States and South Korea, and within the framework of the Six Party Talks, Fukuda expressed his hope that our countries can join together and resolve the issues before us.

Historical Issues

15. (C) One notable result of the summit was Fukuda's offer to Roh to return the remains of approximately 100 Korean conscripts who fought for the Japanese during World War II, MOFA's Akahori said. The remains have been interred at Yutenji Temple in Tokyo for nearly 40 years, and only recently had they been identified and the whereabouts of living relatives in Korea ascertained. Japan will return the remains in early 2008.

16. (C) Unlike previous Japan-ROK summit meetings, the subjects of Takeshima/Tokdo and Yasukuni Shrine did not come up, Akahori continued. Instead, President Roh referred in general terms to the desire of the Korean people, who are "close to the Japanese historically and geographically," to continue to improve relations in a future-oriented manner. Recognizing that this would likely be President Roh's last summit meeting with a Japanese Prime Minister, PM Fukuda offered his thanks, to which President Roh replied that "it has been a tough five years," Akahori said.

Reaction in Japan Generally Favorable

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17. (C) The reaction to Fukuda's Asia summitry, including with President Roh, PRC Wen Jiabao and others (septel), was favorably reported by the Japanese press. Most editorials credited Fukuda's successful meetings to his emphasis on developing positive relations with Asia, and his approach to Japan's relations with Korea, China and the rest of the region is being billed as the "Second Fukuda Doctrine" (the first "Fukuda Doctrine" being that of his father, former Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda, in the 1970's).
DONOVAN